CHRIST CENTERED COMMUNITY (C3) HOMEWORK

“Edifying the body by embracing the grace of the Spirit to live out the love of the Son in fellowship that glorifies the Father”

Red Text = Tips and guides to help use the questions

Blue Text = Sample Answers

Green Text = Additional questions to ask

WARM UP

1. What is your all-time favorite TV Show? Movie? Book (besides the Bible)?

2. When it the last time you would say you legitimately had to protect something or someone?

DIGGING DEEPER

3. What was the most practical thing for you personally from Pastor Randy's message?

4. Do you think it is more important to avoid letting bad things into your mind or to fill your mind with good things?

* You can find examples of both avoiding and filling in scripture. Psalm 101:3 says "I will not set before my eyes anything that is worthless." And twice in Proverbs (2:1, 7:1) we are told to "treasure up my commands within you." But ultimately guarding and avoiding shameful things is useless if we do not fill out minds with godly things. Romans 1:28 makes it clear that the reason we have depravity in our minds in because we did not "retain the knowledge of God" in our thinking. Jesus explains Matt 12:43-45 that if a person is not filled with good things unclean things will always creep back in.
* Psalm 14:1 and Romans 1:18-32 make it Crystal clear that the mind that refused to have God in it (fill it) is there person who is a fool and has a corrupted mind. God within the mind is the motivation to guard bad from outside.

a) Read Psalm 119:11. How does that verse affect your answer?

* The power to fight sin (wrong desires - Rom 7:7-8) comes by filling our minds with God's word which displays God's character.
* How does Job 22:24-26 reinforce this idea?

b) Read Phil 4:4-9. Paul says the peace of God will guard your minds. In the context of these verses, does that protection for your mind come mainly by means of avoiding something bad or by filling with something good?

* (make a list of all the ways God uses as the means to protect your mind with peace in this passage)
* The primary way God brings peace to our minds to guard them in this passage is by filling it with godly things.
	+ V4 - Rejoice in the Lord. This is the most important way to guard your mind with peace. Be satisfied in all that God is for you and that will protect you from wandering in your thinking.
	+ V6 - Avoid anxiety but do this by filling your mind with prayer and thankfulness towards God.
	+ V8 - Meditate (continually fix your mind) on all these good things. Fill your mind with whatever is praiseworthy. All these descriptions can be applied to God.
	+ V9 - Not only thinking but doing the right things is also a way that God brings peace to protect your mind.

5. Read 1 Sam 16:7. Based on what we looked at in Proverbs 4:23-27, why do you think God places more importance on our hearts than outward appearance?

* The heart is who we really are. The heart is the factory that produces all our desires and motivations. We may be able to mask our hearts on the outside (see next question) but we cannot hide what is in our hearts.
* **Luke 6:45** **(NKJV) —** **45** A good man out of the good treasure of his heart brings forth good; and an evil man out of the evil treasure of his heart brings forth evil. For out of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaks.

a) Read Matt 23:25-28. How does Jesus describe the outward appearance of these men compared to the inward reality of their hearts?

* Jesus uses some of his strongest language and most scathing indictments to describe hypocrites:
	+ clean on the outside - full of extortion and self-indulgence
	+ whitewashed tombs - full of dead man's bones
	+ beautiful outwardly - all uncleanness within
	+ righteous - full of hypocrisy and lawlessness

b) What does it look like for a person to be "beautiful" on the outside but "full of dead men's bones" on the inside? Do you ever find yourself falling into that?

(This is a personal reflection question designed to get people to think and talk about how we personally put on masks in front of other people. Tip: The best way to break the ice on a tough question like this is to give you answer first.)

6. Mark 12:30. Jesus teaches fulfillment of the law is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. What does it look like to love God with your mind?

* Loving God with your mind means intellectually savoring God for who He is. God designed our minds to produce thoughts that fuel the emotions and affections of our hearts to love Him more. Let the things you think about be the kinds of things that your heart can use to love God deeper. Our worship should be in spirit (emotional component) and in truth (intellectual component) so loving God (which is worship since loving God means you think He is the best or most worthy of adoration) requires us to think about who He is and know Him better.
* How can you do that practically?

How can loving God be an effective way to guard your mind?

* Loving God like Jesus describes in Mark 12:30 means thinking and feeling and acting in such a way that you value God above everything else. In other words, you think God is the best - period. But if you love God in that way, you will do everything in your power (heart, mind, soul, strength) to get more of Him and imitate Him and bring Him joy. That pursuit is protection against sin and wrong desire. Moving towards God protects you from moving towards sin because they are exact opposites. In a real sense, you cannot love in a Mark 12:30 way and still sin. Jesus loved God perfectly so Jesus never sinned. Those are simply two sides to the same coin.
* To say it another way, finding joy in God (loving God) ruins you to the deceitful pleasures of sin.

7. Read Eph 4:17-24. How does Paul describe the person whose mind and heart are unguarded?

* Futile in their minds. Darkened understanding. Separated from life in God. Ignorant. Blind in their hearts. Numb or callous in their conscience. Surrendered to sin. Greedy in their pursuit of wrong desires.
* How does this list compare to Rom 1:18-32?
1. According to verse 20, what corrupts our hearts and minds?
* Deceitful desires or lusts

b) What does Paul mean by how do these lusts or desires deceive us? What lies do they tell?

* Sin lies to us in the same way that the Serpent lied to Eve in the garden. Sin tells us to do this or get that or taste this and you will be happier. Sin says that if you just try it you will be satisfied, and life will be better. Sin always says God is not the best and His ways are not the most enjoyable.

c) In V20-24, list all the ways Paul says we can protect our hearts and minds?

* Learn the truth of Christ
* Put off your old sinful self
* Be renewed in your mind
* Put on the new man that has been restored to image God

8. From Sunday's message, what things in your life do you need to remove or guard against to protect your mind?

(Dig in with your group on a practical and applicational level with this question. Build the foundation that will enable you to hold each other accountable)

 How can you do that this week?